



## Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact [support@jstor.org](mailto:support@jstor.org).

## The Whitewater Valley

THE Whitewater region, with which the four preceding articles are concerned, comprising the valley of the Whitewater river with its two branches, extends from the Ohio river northward for nearly half the length of the State, with a width varying from twelve to twenty-five miles. In pioneer times it was familiarly known as "The Whitewater," and the frequency with which it is alluded to in the local literature of those days reveals its then importance.

This territory has, indeed, claims to distinction. There, it may be said, Indiana practically had her beginnings. There lay the first strip of land that marked, in Indiana, the oncoming tide of the white man's progress westward—the first overlap from Ohio, which grew, cession by cession, west and north. There sprang up some of our most important early centers of population—Lawrenceburg, Brookville, Connersville, Richmond, and others; there resided, at one time or another, a remarkable number of men who have made their impress upon the State's history or on the world at large, and thence came waves of migration that have spread over the State. This immigration has supplied an important element of the population in not a few localities. Indianapolis, for example, in her first days was so nearly made up of people from Whitewater and Kentucky that a political division, it is said, sprang up along the sectional line, and these two classes were arrayed against each other in the first local campaign, with Whitewater leading. Long after that they continued to come from the cities mentioned above and intervening localities, and the number at the capital to-day who look back to the Whitewater as their old home is surprisingly large. Madison, also, in her growing, hopeful days, drew good blood from this center, and over the State generally, and beyond its borders, the same is true.

Of the men of mark who have hailed from the Whitewater Brookville and Franklin county alone lay claim to perhaps half-a-hundred, the most notable of whom I find named and classified as follows in the columns of a Brookville paper:

GOVERNORS—James B. Ray, Noah Noble, William Wallace

and Abraham Hammond, Governors of Indiana; Will Cumback, Lieutenant-Governor of Indiana; Lew Wallace, Governor of New Mexico; John P. St. John, Governor of Kansas; Stephen S. Harding, Governor of Utah; J. Wallace, Governor of Wyoming. Nominated for Governor of Indiana, but defeated: J. A. Matson, Whig, and C. C. Matson, Democrat, father and son.

UNITED STATES SENATORS—Jesse B. Thomas, from Illinois; James Noble and Robert Hanna, from Indiana; John Henderson, from Mississippi.

CABINET OFFICERS AND FOREIGN MINISTERS, ETC.—James N. Tyner, Postmaster General; James S. Clarkson, Assistant Postmaster General; Lew Wallace, Minister to Turkey; Edwin Terrell, Minister to Belgium; George Hitt, Vice-Consul to London; L. T. Mitchener, Attorney-General of Indiana.

SUPREME JUDGES—Isaac Blackford, John T. McKinney and Stephen C. Stephens. It is cited as the most remarkable instance on record that in these three men Brookville had at one time the entire Supreme Bench of Indiana.

WRITERS EDUCATORS AND MINISTERS—Lew Wallace, Maurice Thompson (born in the county), Joaquin Miller (born in the county), and a dozen or more of local fame; J. P. D. John, (formerly) President DePauw University, Wm. M. Dailey, President Indiana University, L. D. Potter, President Glendale College, R. B. Abbott, President Albert Lea College, Charles N. Sims, Chancellor Syracuse University, S. A. Lattimore, Professor Chemistry Rochester University, E. A. Barber, Professor in University of Nebraska, C. W. Hargitt, Professor in Syracuse University, Francis A. Shoup, Professor in University of Mississippi, J. H. Martin, President Moore's Hill College; Rev. T. A. Goodwin, Rev. Charles N. Sims, and Rev. Francis A. Shoup.

ART—William M. Chase, painter; Hiram Powers, sculptor.

SCIENCE—James B. Eads, civil engineer, constructor of the great bridge at St. Louis, and of the jetties at the mouth of the Mississippi river; Amos W. Butler, ornithologist and ethnologist, now Secretary of the State Board of Charities.

MILITARY AND NAVAL OFFICERS—Gen. Lew Wallace, Gen. Ambrose E. Burnside, Gen. Francis A. Shoup, Gen. Jos. E. Johnson, Gen. P. A. Hackleman; Oliver H. Glisson, rear admiral, and William L. Herndon, commander, U. S. N.

A few of the above, perhaps, had but slight relations with this region, but allowing for this the output of able men is still remarkably large. If, from Franklin county, we look northward to Connersville, Centerville and Richmond, we find other men whose services and fame are well known within the State, and, in not a few instances, far beyond its borders. In this galaxy are Oliver P. Morton, George W. Julian, Oliver H. Smith, Caleb B. Smith, Charles H. Test, James Rariden, Samuel W. Parker, Samuel K. Hoshour, and other men notable for calibre. Many of these were gathered at Centerville during the time it was the seat of justice of Wayne county, but with the removal of the courts to Richmond they dispersed, a goodly proportion of them finding their way to Indianapolis, beckoned thither, doubtless, by the promise of a larger field for their talents.

The shiftings of the prominent men to and from the White-water are, indeed, something of an index to its fluctuating fortunes. Thus, many of the more notable names of Brookville were identified with it only during brief eras of prosperity induced by extraneous causes, and when these lapsed those who were on the track of opportunities sought pastures new. For example, one of the most flourishing periods in the history of the town began in 1820, when the lands in the interior of the State as far north as the Wabash were thrown open and the land office established at Brookville. As all purchasers of lands in this vast new tract visited the land office not only with their purchase money but with the presumable surplus of travelers, the great impetus to the town's prosperity and growth may easily be conceived. For five years, fed by the visiting thousands, the place throve, and the men who were drawn thither made it a political and intellectual center. Then the question of removing the office to Indianapolis, as a more central location, was agitated. It was bitterly opposed by Brookville citizens, who had an unconcealed contempt for the little, insignificant "capital in the woods," buried in miasmatic solitude and surrounded, as James Brown Ray said in one of his pompous speeches, by "a boundless contiguity of shade." Nevertheless, the despised and ague-ridden capital got the land office; the fortune-seekers of Brookville betook themselves elsewhere like migrating birds, and then followed a period of sorry decadence, during which houses over

town stood vacant and dilapidated; all business languished; money became all but extinct, and there was a reversion to the communistic method of exchanging goods for goods, or goods for labor.

This paralysis lay on Brookville and the surrounding country until the schemes for internal improvement, agitated throughout the twenties and for one-half of the third decade, began to take definite and practical shape. About 1833, according to Mr. T. A. Goodwin, there was a revival of life in the Whitewater; people began to paint their houses and mend their fences, and deserted houses began to fill up. The internal improvement act of 1836 provided for the construction of "the Whitewater Canal, commencing on the west branch of the Whitewater river, at the crossing of the National road, thence passing down the valley of the same to the Ohio river, at Lawrenceburg, and extending up the said west branch of the Whitewater above the National road as far as may be practicable." This was a promise of commercial prosperity and a new lease of life to the Whitewater region. The day that the contracts were let at Brookville for building the various sections of the canal there was a grand jollification--speechmaking, dinner, toasts and all the rest; and a like enthusiasm prevailed in all the valley. Towns sprang up along the proposed route and lay in wait, and as the canal, crawling northward, reached them successively, making one and then another the head of navigation, each flourished and had its day, drawing to itself the wheat and hogs and other agricultural exports from the inlying country for many miles east, north and west. This great trade, of course, always sought the nearest point of shipment, and so Brookville, Metamora, Laurel, Connersville and Cambridge City were, in turn, receiving ports and reaped the benefits of traffic. The people on the east branch, not to be outdone by their neighbors on the west, also strove energetically for a canal between Brookville and Richmond that should promote the development of this valley, and, though the work was never completed, much labor and money was expended upon it.\*

The old canal days are a distinct era in the history of our State. The younger generation knows little about them, but many a reminiscence might be picked up of the merchant fleets of the Whitewater and the idyllic journeyings up and down the

\*See article in this number on the Richmond and Brookville Canal.

beautiful valley by packet. This order of things, which continued for about thirty years, was maintained in the face of serious discouragements, for the Whitewater river, one of the swiftest streams in the State, is subject to violent freshets, and these have repeatedly damaged the canal, effectually stopping traffic and entailing heavy expenses in repairs. The great flood of 1847 all but ruined the ditch, and scarcely was this recovered from when another proved almost as disastrous. Besides these checks on traffic untold thousands of dollars have been lost by the sweeping away of mills and other property, and, in the opinion of many old citizens, these disheartening losses has caused much of the exodus away from the valley.

The lower part of the Whitewater valley, with Brookville as its center, lies today aloof from the trunk railway lines that have been the great determining factor in the development of the country. But if it lacks the bustle and growth of some other, newer sections of the State, it has another and a different attraction that is rare in Indiana—the attraction of great natural beauty of landscape combined with quiet idyllic charm and pleasing reminders of the past. The disused bed of the old Whitewater Canal and its crumbling stone locks are grown with grass. Grass grows in the peaceful thoroughfares in and about the villages of Laurel and Metamora, and in these villages and in Brookville quaint and weather-worn houses speak of a past generation of builders. Our artists have already discovered the picturesqueness of the region, and some of Indiana's abundant literary talent might well find inspiration here before it is too late. Before it is too late, we say, for in the new era that is coming in, when the power of swift rivers is to be transformed into the mechanical powers of progress, is it not possible that history may repeat itself along the rushing Whitewater, and that the electric-driven mill and factory and electric transportation may restore to the valley much of its old-time standing?

G. S. C.